

## **KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION**

### **STAFF NOTE**

#### **Action/Discussion Item:**

Kentucky Education Technology System (KETS) FY07 Unmet Need for LEAs

#### **Applicable Statute or Regulation:**

KRS 156.670

KRS 156.690

KRS 157.655

KRS 157.660

#### **Action Question:**

Should the Kentucky Board of Education approve the unmet need for school districts?

#### **History/Background:**

***Existing Policy.*** According to KRS 157.660, the School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) can provide a KETS Offer of Assistance to a school district only after the Kentucky Board of Education approves the district's unmet need. Therefore, each fiscal year the KBE approves each district's technology unmet need.

The Master Plan for Education Technology, which was originally approved in 1992, describes in detail the process for determining Offers of Assistance, the school technology planning process, the state review and assistance calculation methods, and examples of how data extracted from the plans relates to funds allocated to schools. The annual FY07 unmet need for each district is determined by what they report it takes to minimally operate, maintain, and incrementally upgrade existing investments while also acquiring new and emerging technology. This annual unmet need is approximately \$122M. This total is then divided by the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) to determine each district's unmet need. Also, in spite of the substantial financial investment, full funding of the KETS program fell short by \$300M during the previous 6 years. Therefore, there is a total unmet need of approximately \$422M. It is important to remember that KETS Offers of Assistance only represent part of the funding strategy needed to support each district's technology services.

This staff note is requesting that the KBE acknowledge and approve the unmet need. In the FY07 KETS Implementation Plan, the board will be considering approval of the amount of FY07 funds available to go toward that unmet need. Districts will need to continue to secure alternative funding sources beyond the KETS funds, (e.g., federal funds, local grants, etc.) to fully fund the unmet need. Budgeting skills will be required to sustain and implement a successful KETS program.

The four basic categories of unmet need are operation, maintenance, incremental replacement and new technologies. Of the four categories, expenditures in Operations and Maintenance are absolutely necessary to sustain current levels of service. That is, if unmet need within the Operations and Maintenance categories is not addressed in accordance with program guidelines, the integrity, sufficiency, and capacity of the district technology infrastructure will degrade until services are seriously curtailed or eliminated. These include items like student workstation repair, teacher workstation repair, instructional software improvements, classroom printer repair, instructional fileserver repair, school management software improvements, initial/ongoing technology integration professional development, student technology leadership services, Internet services, telephone communications to parents, distance learning service, help desk services, e-mail services, enterprise data system access and school financial management services.

The unmet need for Incremental Replacement constitutes a framework for replacement of various technology components on a scheduled basis over time, in accordance with the life cycle of each item or service. These include items like student workstations, teacher workstations, instructional fileservers, assistive and adaptive technology, school laser printers, classroom color printers, wireless networks, student hand-held devices, high-speed fiber networks, desktop conferencing, and digital projection devices.

The unmet need for New Technologies includes products and services that are more discretionary in nature, products and services that are today only marginally available or affordable, and products and services that are perceived as needs in the planning horizon.

### **Policy Issues and Options:**

The following must occur before a district receives its funding: (1) State Board approves unmet need for each district, (2) School Facilities Construction Commission (SFCC) approves unmet need, (3) The district successfully meets all of the statutory requirements of KRS 157.655 and KRS 157.660, (4) the district verifies their final average daily attendance (ADA) count to KDE and (5) KDE calculates Offers of Assistance based on these variables. The districts must follow requirements of the SFCC by receiving approved board action and proof of deposit of funds into a local interest bearing technology account. The SFCC will then wire funds to the district's technology account.

### **Staff Recommendation and Rationale:**

Staff recommends approval of the unmet need funding and staff certifies that the districts recommended by the Commissioner have met all the statutory requirements of KRS 157.655 and KRS 157.660. They will be required to adequately describe their unmet need and current KETS inventory before FY 07 Offers of Assistance are distributed.

### **Impact on Getting to Proficiency:**

Approval of the unmet need amounts for local school districts is the first step required to allow local school districts to receive state funding to assist them in purchasing hardware, software,

personnel, professional development and other technology initiatives that will support students in achieving academic excellence and reaching proficiency by 2014.

**Groups Consulted and Brief Summary of Responses:**

The calculations for KETS unmet need has been reviewed by the following before being presented to the Kentucky Board of Education:

- KDE staff
- School Facilities Construction Commission
- District Technology Coordinators
- District Leadership Staff

These groups support the KBE's approval of the unmet need.

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**Deputy Commissioner**

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**Commissioner of Education**

**Date:**

August 2006